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DE RUEHMS #0455 1390700  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P R 190700Z MAY 09  
FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0422  
INFO ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0020  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0022  
RUEHMS/AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

UNCLAS MUSCAT 000455

SIPDIS  
STATE FOR NEA/ARP  
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LONDON FOR NEA WATCHER  
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E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [OIIP](#) [KPAO](#) [KMDR](#) [MU](#)  
SUBJECT: OMAN MEDIA REACTION

11. SUMMARY: This week, Omani public and private dailies alike looked forward with a mix of skepticism and guarded optimism to the President's meeting with the Israeli Prime Minister. Private youth-oriented daily "Al Shabiba" carried a surprisingly forthright, if pessimistic, column on the future of Omani civil society. END SUMMARY.

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"THE TWO-STATE SOLUTION IS INEVITABLE"  
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12. On May 13, private Arabic daily "Al Watan" (circulation 42,000) opined that, since the international community seems to agree on the two-state solution, it can also Israel to accept the creation of Palestine, saying that "International Credibility is in the Balance":

"Public opinion, including that of supporters of Israel, has never before been so keen in support of the creation of the Palestinian state. There is a great international and regional desire and movement toward the application of the two-state solution, despite the reservations of the Israeli right-wing extremists. The international community seems to accept the two-state solution, and this is the position that is expected from the Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu meeting in Washington hence: to send the clear message that the two-state solution is inevitable."

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A SOCIETY "CAPTIVE TO CULTURAL AND SOCIAL PATTERNS"  
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13. The private Arabic daily "Al-Shabiba" (circulation 20,000) Carried a column by Murrow Fellow Mohammed al Bulushi on May 16, regarding the challenges that hinder the creation of civil society in Oman, titled "A Civil Society":

"The storm of change promoted by the American administration after September 11 regarding the concepts of democracy, freedom of opinion, and building civil societies, combined with the mobility and impact of the Internet, has made the idea of creating a civil society in our country plausible, a society based on free, positive thinking that supports the government as other civil societies do in civilized countries in the developed world. However, there are beliefs - ideologies based on tribalism, religious affiliation, and culture - that make the creation of civil society difficult if not impossible. People depend on sheikhs and religious leaders to develop this understanding, when they themselves are under the authority of the government. Our society will remain captive to our cultural and social patterns and cannot get override them to achieve civil society that we want."

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MEETING "WILL DEFINE THE HORIZONS OF THE REGION"  
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14. On May 18, government Arabic-language daily "Oman" (circulation 38,000) emphasized the importance of the President Obama's meeting with the Israeli prime minister and how it is going to affect many issues in the Middle East, "Important Meeting that Will Define the Horizons of the Region":

"The meeting between Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Obama will be special, not only because it is the first since both men took office, but also because this meeting was preceded by controversies, clashes, and differences in their points of view. The outcomes of this meeting will define U.S. policy in the Middle East and relations between America and Israel. Therefore, it is necessary for the Arabs in general - and Palestinians in particular - to bear in mind that the coming period requires unity, coordination, and concentration of effort to deal effectively with any developments and attitudes that result from this meeting."

GRAPPO